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modern psychology. He sees clearly the inadequacy of Tarde's imitation theory of society and also of Marx's economic interpretation of history, pointing out their defects from the standpoint of psychology. It is to be hoped that Dr. Davis will develop sometime systematically his psychological sociology. Even as it stands, the work is a decided contribution to theoretical sociology.

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The American Newspaper. By JAMES EDWARD ROGERS. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909. Pp. xiii, 213. \$1 net.)

The American Newspaper, by James Edward Rogers, is an indictment of the American people. It is a severe but not a carefully drawn indictment nor is the charge made fully proven. It is not intended to indict the people, but to be "an analysis of contemporary journalism." The American press, Mr. Rogers concludes, is a reflex of the American nation; the newspaper is what the people make it. This newspaper, he decides, is "essentially sensational and commercial." The American people crave sensation and are essentially commercial.

Mr. Rogers traces first the historic evolution of the modern newspaper. This evolution, the author admits, is "hastily sketched." On one page he states that freedom of the press has always existed in America, while on the next page he declares that the press was in its earlier years wholly "subservient to the opinions of those in authority." There are other marks of haste. The brief and unrelated historical sketch prefaces a more comprehensive consideration of the press of the present day. This present-day press is considered from several view-points. Its environment is discussed, the nature and influence of the newspaper and the causes of the influence, psychological and economic. Mr. Rogers eliminates from consideration all the American press except the large metropolitan dailies. Ignoring the fact that the size, number, circulation, and influence of the country newspapers, have increased rapidly in the last decade, he declines to regard as worth while in a study of American journalism, any newspaper outside the greater cities. Indeed, though he has examined "some 15,000 news-

papers from all sections of the country as a first means of getting some acquaintance with the necessary facts before forming any decided judgments," he concludes that New York, Chicago, New Orleans, and San Francisco "give us American journalism, representing the characteristics, the sentiments, the desires and hopes of the country."

After thus limiting the field of study, Mr. Rogers examines "with care and in detail" the American press. The *Boston Post* he regards as "a type of a good conservative paper." Such a paper he thinks, should give the daily news sanely, devote its editorials chiefly to politics and business, not primarily to seek to catch subscribers but to educate and develop sound public opinion. The *New York Herald* is his example of "the sensational journal," the second class into which he divides the press and that class which "is the most distinctive type." "Yellow journalism" is the third and most objectionable but relatively unimportant class. Mr. Rogers finds that the sensational newspaper devotes 20 per cent of its space to crime, while the ordinary conservative newspaper devotes only 5 per cent. If this is true, though Mr. Rogers does not point it out, the so-called sensational press would devote as much space proportionately to crime as does the Bible. The so-called conservative press would fall far behind. Mr. Rogers asserts that editors manufacture news and that they are paid large salaries to lie. "Pages of news are discarded that the public should know about." The most typical form of American newspaper "caters to the public"—which is held to be a high crime—"plays up," seeks, doctors, sensationalizes, trivializes, falsifies, muck-rakes, advertises news, is irresponsible, partisan, and flouts the law. He laments that nothing is too old or hackneyed to be told attractively in a newspaper. A reporter, as he views it, must be a liar and a thief by turns. It is interesting also to note that this study of the American press has led the author to the conclusion that political partisanship has the press in its grasp and that "the leaders of the party generally own and control the papers."

Though edited by bright men who have no regard for truth or any other virtue, the American newspapers, Mr. Rogers finds, "exercise an influence more far-reaching than in any other country." Because of its large circulation the American newspaper has wide influence. "It appeals to the worst instincts in man,

to his brutal passions and morbid imagination." This influence keeps the best men out of office by indiscriminate abuse of public officials. It is exerted against wise legislation, it is used to flout the law. "Many papers preach a disregard for the laws of the country and the institutions of society." These newspapers are of course unnamed by Mr. Rogers. "Libel laws are on the whole inoperative." The American newspaper undertakes to influence juries. "In the English courts conviction can be had only on the evidence which is legally admitted and not upon hearsay and gossip." The inference is that, because of the newspaper, a different rule exists in American courts. While Mr. Rogers finds much wrong with the American newspaper, its chief offense is its popularity. It appeals to the masses of the people. It does not educate but it is read. Mr. Rogers sums up the influence of the newspaper as "neither wholly degrading nor wholly elevating, the mirror of public opinion."

In a concluding chapter the author considers the causes of the influence of the American newspaper, "the vigorous, commercial, self-interested and sensational press that it is." This influence has first a psychological cause. The newspaper merely reflects the mind of the people. Hence Mr. Rogers analyzes the American mind. Distinctive American characteristics he classifies as audacity, independence, cupidity, curiosity, strenuousness, and love of change. The American newspaper reflects and typifies these characteristics. There is also an economic cause for the character, tone, and influence of the press. This Mr. Rogers finds in "the effects of this age of modern industrialism." The press is in bondage to privilege.

"The cause of the influence of the American newspaper is inherent in the nation itself and the newspaper is what it is because American society is what it is. Given a certain type of society, we have a certain kind of newspaper; an agricultural country gives us the local conservative journal; the industrial community a national sensational journal. It is not within the province of this book to discuss remedies. Yet this much may be said, that if this analysis of American journalism is sound, if the character of the press is chiefly sensational and commercial, with only a secondary place given to the cultural aspects of human thought, and if, as has been claimed, the cause of this

influence lies in the present character of the American people, it is obvious that the only hope for improvement lies in the elevation of the standards of this people, in emancipation from commercialism and its matter-of-fact and leveling tendencies."

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